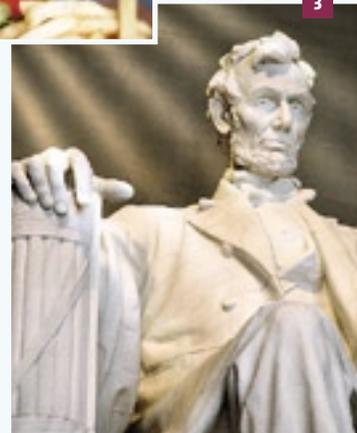


# THE AMERICAN DREAM REVISITED



- 1 What comes to mind when you hear the words 'United States of America'? Do your impressions come from books, films, TV, articles, or your own experience?
- 2 Identify the symbols depicted in the photos on this page. Explain their significance.
- 3 What different meaning does the American flag have for the demonstrators, on the one hand, and for the homeowners flying it in their front yards, on the other?
- 4 Are there any other things that symbolize the United States and the American way of life for you?

# 1 The American Dream



CD

## A I Have a Dream

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

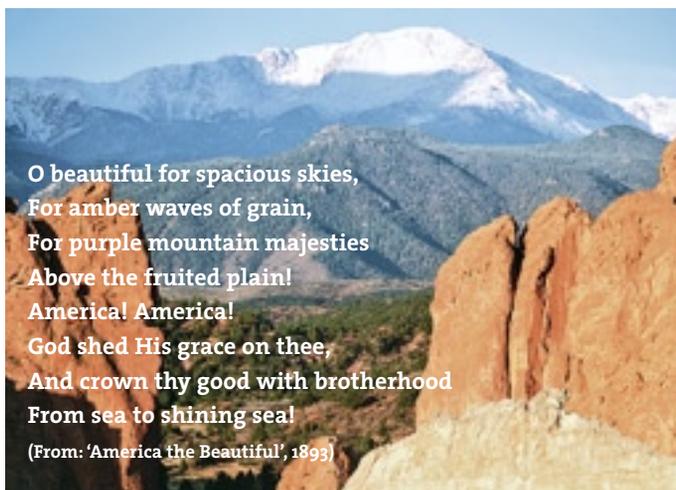
- 1 How does Martin Luther King manage to move his listeners?
- 2 Sum up his dream in a few words.

CD

## B America the Beautiful

KATHERINE LEE BATES

'America the Beautiful' is one of the most popular American patriotic songs. It has often been suggested as a replacement for 'The Star-Spangled Banner' as the national anthem.



O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

(From: 'America the Beautiful', 1893)

<sup>6</sup> shed sth. (here) *pour sth.*  
<sup>6,7</sup> shed, crown *these are the subjunctive forms of the verbs* <sup>6</sup> thee (old-fashioned)  
you <sup>7</sup> thy (old-fashioned)  
your

## C Dirty Blvd.

LOU REED

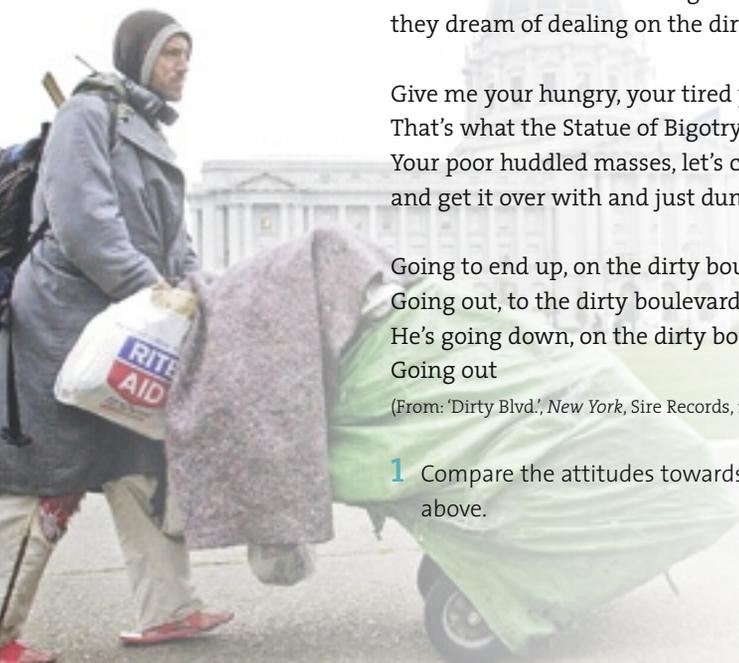
This room cost 2,000 dollars a month, you can believe it man it's true  
Somewhere a landlord's laughing till he wets his pants  
No one here dreams of being a doctor or a lawyer or anything  
they dream of dealing on the dirty boulevard

Give me your hungry, your tired your poor I'll piss on 'em  
That's what the Statue of Bigotry says  
Your poor huddled masses, let's club 'em to death  
and get it over with and just dump 'em on the boulevard

Going to end up, on the dirty boulevard  
Going out, to the dirty boulevard  
He's going down, on the dirty boulevard  
Going out

(From: 'Dirty Blvd.', *New York*, Sire Records, 1989)

- 1 Compare the attitudes towards the 'American Dream' presented in the two songs above.



## CONTEXT BOX

### American Dreams, American Nightmares

What is it that has lured tens of millions of people from every nation to the shores of the United States? This question was asked by the historian James Truslow Adams in the 1930s. His answer was [the American Dream](#) – ‘that dream of a land in which [life should be better and richer and fuller](#) for every man, with [opportunity for each according to his ability and achievement](#).’ It is not merely the dream of the [land of plenty](#) but a dream of a social order in which men and women are able to [realize their full potential](#), regardless of their socio-economic and ethnic background.

If you ask Americans today how they understand the American Dream, you will get many different responses. Some see it as [a thing of the past](#). Others claim that it is [alive and well](#) and feel that Americans should [make it a reality for all](#). For some it is the dream of [decent and affordable housing](#). For others it is the dream of [racial equality and justice for all](#), while some see it as the dream of [upward social mobility](#), of [success through education and hard work](#). Most Americans still emphasize the importance of [self-reliance](#) and are [sceptical of government interference](#). For them the American Dream has to do with [individual freedom](#) and the opportunity to [make a](#)



[better life for yourself](#). But all Americans will agree that the American Dream has been central to American beliefs and behaviour.

Historically, the American Dream was a dream of [the West](#) and [the frontier](#), i.e. the [moving border-line between civilization and wilderness](#). When the [westward movement](#) reached the Pacific coast in the second half of the 19th century, there was no more [open space](#) to be conquered. [Unlimited expansion](#) had come to an end, and Americans had to [seek new frontiers and challenges](#) in science and technology, in space exploration, in social and political reform, in foreign aid and global commitment.

While [patriotism, positive thinking, optimism about the future, pragmatism, and a can-do attitude](#) are characteristic of many Americans, there has always been [a self-critical awareness](#) that America has failed to [live up to its ideals](#) and that for many the [promise of America](#) has not come true. The United States has not become [the New Jerusalem](#) that the Puritans hoped for; rather it has become a society which faces a host of

social, economic and ecological problems. Some even fear that the American Dream has [turned into a nightmare](#). The United States, they say, has become a wasteful consumer society of lonely individuals, with a government that does not do enough to close the growing gap between the rich and the poor.

- 1 What fundamental opportunity does the 'American Dream', as defined by James Truslow Adams, offer the American people?
- 2 What various interpretations of the 'American Dream' do those Americans who still believe in it have?
- 3 How did the 'American Dream' change in the course of American history? Explain.
- 4 What attitudes are often associated with those Americans who believe in the 'American Dream'?
- 5 Look at John Gast's painting 'American Progress' (1872). What strong conviction is the angel hovering above the settlers' heads a symbol of?

## 2 Immigration: Lifeblood of the Nation

### A The Tortilla Curtain

T. CORAGHESSAN BOYLE

The following excerpt is from T. Coraghessan Boyle's novel *The Tortilla Curtain*. Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher are liberal white Americans who live an idyllic life in Los Angeles with their young son Jordan until one day Delaney hits a poor illegal immigrant from Mexico with his car, seriously injuring him. In this extract Jack Jardine, a friend and neighbour, is talking to Delaney in a supermarket, where they have met by accident.

'Did you know that the U.S. accepted more immigrants last year than all the other countries of the world *combined* – and that half of them settled in California? And that's *legal* immigrants, people with skills, money, education. The ones coming through the Tortilla Curtain down there, those are the ones that are killing us. They're peasants, my friend. No education, no resources, no skills – and all they've got to offer is a strong back, and the irony is we need fewer and fewer strong backs every day because we've got robotics and computers and farm machinery that can do the labor of a hundred men at a fraction of the cost.' He dropped his hand in dismissal. 'It's old news.'

Delaney set the milk down on the floor. He was in a hurry, dinner on the stove, Jordan in the car, Kyra about to walk in the door, but in the heat of the moment he forgot all about it. 'I can't believe you,' he said, and he couldn't seem to control his free arm, waving it in an expanding loop. 'Do you realize what you are saying? Immigrants are the lifeblood of this country – we're a nation of immigrants – and neither of us would be standing here today if it wasn't.'

'Clichés. There's a point of saturation. Besides which, the Jardines fought in the Revolutionary War – you could hardly call us immigrants.'

'Everybody's an immigrant from somewhere. My grandfather came over from Bremen and my grandmother was Irish – does that make me any less a citizen than the Jardines?'

A woman with frosted hair and a face drawn tight as a drumskin ducked between them for a jar of olives. Jack worked a little grit into his voice: 'That's not the point. Times have changed, my friend. Radically. Do you have any idea what these people are costing us, and not just in terms of crime, but in real tax dollars for social services? No? Well, you ought to. You must have seen that thing in the *Times* a couple of weeks ago, about the San Diego study?'

Delaney shook his head. He felt his stomach sink. [...]

'Look, Delaney,' Jack went on, cool, reasonable, his voice in full song now, 'It's a simple equation, so much in, so much out. The illegals in San Diego County contributed seventy million in tax revenues and at the same time they used up two hundred and forty million in services – welfare, emergency care, schooling and the like. You want to pay for that? And for the crime that comes with it? You want another crazy Mexican throwing himself under your wheels hoping for insurance payoff? Or worse, you want one of *them* behind the wheel bearing down on you, no insurance, no brakes, no nothing?'

Delaney was trying to organize his thoughts. He wanted to tell Jack that he was wrong, that everyone deserved a chance in life and that the Mexicans would assimilate just like the Poles, Italians, Germans, Irish and Chinese and that besides which we'd stolen California from them in the first place, but he didn't get the chance.

(From: *The Tortilla Curtain*, Viking, New York, 1995)

**1 MEDIATION ENGLISH TO GERMAN:** Beantworten Sie die folgenden Aufgaben stichpunktartig auf Deutsch.

- 1 Erklären Sie, was Jack mit dem Begriff *Tortilla Curtain* (Z.4) meint.
- 2 Was will Jack zum Ausdruck bringen, wenn er den Begriff *point of saturation* (Z.16) verwendet?
- 3 Geben Sie sinngemäß die Aussagen wieder, in denen sich die vollkommen unterschiedlichen Einstellungen von Jack und Delaney zur Einwanderung in die USA widerspiegeln.

**2 GROUP DISCUSSION:** In groups, discuss Jack's and Delaney's positions. Which one do you find more convincing? Explain!

**3 DESCRIPTIVE WRITING:** Describe and interpret the following cartoon. Write about 120 words.





## B Colombia to the East End: A Tale of Success

JOY ALTER HUBEL

**A** In these heady days of stock-market surges and overnight millionaires, success stories are everywhere. They often feature young, hard-working businessmen, like Fredy Bedoya, a landscape contractor who held tightly to the reins of the galloping economy and rode it to success. Except that Mr. Bedoya, a native of Colombia, is probably the only businessman to have started his ride on a rusty three-speed bicycle, peddling his landscape services door to door, from one Long Island town to another. Working as a dishwasher for \$3 an hour, and then as a seasonal landscaper for twice that, he was eventually able to buy a rake, a pair of hedge shears and an edging tool – the limit to what could be carried on the back of a bicycle. ‘I would knock on people’s doors and offer to do clean-ups and lawns, but because my English was so bad, they couldn’t even understand me,’ he said. 5

**B** Today, nine years after clipping his first Island hedge, Mr. Bedoya, 32 years old and the owner of Sag Harbor Landscaping, operates seven trucks and a \$500,000 business. Last December he purchased a six-acre former potato farm in Jamesport for \$400,000, and is making it the site of a new nursery that he hopes will double his operation. But the distance Mr. Bedoya hopes to go seems modest compared with the distance he has come, a 6,000-mile pilgrimage from Colombia to the United States, partly on foot. 10 15

**C** ‘I always knew I could make it in the U.S.,’ said Mr. Bedoya, who eagerly gave up a sales job in Pereira, Colombia, where he earned the equivalent of \$50 a month, for the possibility of something better. ‘I sold my motorcycle, bought a ticket to Panama, and from there made my way, on foot, one country at a time, through Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico,’ he said. ‘I just thought of it as a big adventure – always to go forward, never back. People in Colombia struggle so hard just getting from day to day that often they don’t care so much about life and death. They are happy to take their chances through the tunnel,’ says Mr. Bedoya. 20 25

**D** By the time Mr. Bedoya reached Mexico, he was rail-thin from hunger and half hoping to be arrested just so he could get fed. But when this wish came true and Mexican law enforcers finally did throw him into a detention center, he was badly beaten. Fortunately, a sympathetic officer allowed him to escape. Once out of prison, he hired a guide who, in exchange for a \$1,200 IOU, agreed to escort Mr. Bedoya and 300 other immigrants to the United States border. Traveling mostly at night, he eventually made his way to Los Angeles, where he worked long enough to buy a plane ticket to the East Coast. ‘They told me how much higher the salaries were in the East, but they didn’t say how much colder it was,’ he said. ‘I remember riding my bicycle through terrible snow storms, and my hair turning into the shape of an ice cube.’ But Mr. Bedoya did not let frozen winters chill his resolve. 30 35

**E** ‘The same mix of tenacity and resourcefulness that carried him from South America to Sag Harbor, a town on Long Island, is what makes him successful in business,’ said Michelle Stark, business adviser at a local small-business development center, where Fredy Bedoya is her client. The same might be said about countless other Latino immigrants who have managed to gain a foothold in a financially secure life. ‘Through every cycle of economic innovation in this country, immigrants have been a force of transformation and have changed the face of the economy’s distressed areas,’ Ms. Stark noted. Today that distress arises 40 45

<sup>6</sup> Long Island an island located just northeast of New York City <sup>31</sup> IOU (informal) a note that you sign to say that you own someone some money

from the shortage of manual labor that Long Island faces. The contractors and landscapers who have been buoyed by the economic expansion of the past 10 years have grown dependent on immigrants. ‘Thirty years ago, no one had landscapers; now most of us do. And as you walk past them, you hear only Spanish being spoken,’ said Margarita Grasing, executive director of a local Hispanic community center.

**F** Hispanic immigration has come in waves, starting with Cubans and Puerto Ricans 40 years ago, then Dominicans and now Central Americans. And while many of the earlier immigrants ended up in the restaurant and grocery business, Latinos have now been turning to landscaping and construction. ‘Many Hispanic immigrants have worked their way up from laborers and crewmen to foremen,’ says Ellen Talmadge, president of the Long Island Nursery and Landscape Association. ‘It’s a great place for people to start out. If they don’t know the language, they learn from other workers. And the nice thing about growing plants is that you don’t need English skills.’ She estimates that about half of the agricultural and landscaping work force is Hispanic. Job opportunities are still plentiful, from crew members to truck drivers.

**G** Mr. Bedoya said most of his employees are Latino, and he is ready to pay for landscaping courses that his workers may want to take, and otherwise give them an opportunity to learn a business that they may be able to start for themselves one day. When it comes to starting up one’s own business, however, Mr. Bedoya is still the exception. According to the Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, there are about 3,000 Latino-owned businesses on the Island, but more than 300,000 Latino residents. Luiz Vasquez, president of the chamber, said that though economic success is coming for many Hispanic residents, the pace is relatively slow. ‘It is still very hard to break into corporate or administrative positions,’ Mr. Vasquez said. ‘Most successes occur in small retail businesses where a few thousand dollars of investment can go a long way in starting a service-oriented business like landscaping.’

**H** But Hispanic entrepreneurs still face a longer, slower path than their American counterparts. Mr. Vasquez estimated that where it may take an American two to five years to get a business going, it may take Latinos 5 to 10 years. ‘Within that time period a lot of dreams die,’ he added. ‘People go through so much just to get here, and when they do, they realize the struggle is really just beginning and that there is no welcoming committee. Then they get very discouraged.’

**I** Still, many of the hopeful who fill parking lots in the early morning hours waiting for contractors to give them a day’s work reflect not only the successful Latinos who have come before them, but the successes of other immigrant groups, too. The Italian stonemasons in the early 20th century, the Polish potato farmers of the 1940s, and many others managed to weave themselves permanently into the fabric of the Island’s economy. ‘I think there is room for everyone,’ Mr. Vasquez said. ‘And if everyone pulls together to help, we won’t have to look at immigrants standing around in parking lots.’

(Adapted from *The New York Times*, 16 April, 2000)



Paragraph	A	B	C
Heading	...	...	...

**1 MULTIPLE MATCHING:** Match the following headings (1–11) with the appropriate paragraph (A–I). There are two more headings than you need.

- 1 A risk worth taking
- 2 Not in everyone's interest
- 3 No stranger to frustration
- 4 Easy to get one's foot in the door
- 5 The best is yet to come
- 6 Definitely not unprecedented
- 7 A somewhat unconventional way of making it from rags to riches
- 8 History teaches one to be modest
- 9 Opportunity knocks, at least in certain fields
- 10 Progress linked to immigration
- 11 Overcoming formidable obstacles

**2 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS / SENTENCE COMPLETION:** Answer the following questions and complete the following sentences by providing the required information.

- 1 The phrase used in paragraph A to express the fact that a certain period was exhilarating is ...
- 2 Mr Bedoya uses the phrase ... to indicate that many of his fellow-countrymen are willing to do anything to escape their horrible living conditions.
- 3 What sentence is used by the author to signal that Mr Bedoya was absolutely determined to make it in America, even under the most severe conditions?
- 4 How does the author show that newcomers do not receive any special treatment upon their arrival in the States?
- 5 How does the author express the fact that previous groups of immigrants who lived on Long Island succeeded in achieving enduring financial stability and gradually became an economic force to be reckoned with?

**3 GAPPED SUMMARY:** Fill in the blanks with a suitable word from paragraphs E, F and G.

It certainly can be claimed that the combination of ... (1) and ... (2) has enabled many Latino immigrants to secure an economic ... (3) in the United States. Immigrants have invariably contributed to ... (4) in the American economy that, in turn, has greatly helped those regions facing economic ... (5) to overcome their financial hardships. In the process, many of the immigrants themselves have been able to advance from jobs in which they started out as menial workers to those in which they are now employed as ... (6). While one labor expert ... (7) that service-oriented jobs such as those available in the nursery and lawn-care businesses are now quite ... (8), another one stresses the fact that employment opportunities for Hispanic immigrants in ... (9) and ... (10) openings are still relatively rare.

## 3 The American Way of Life

### A Why No One Walks

BILL BRYSON

Bill Bryson is an American who lived for many years in England. After moving back to the USA he started to write a column for the British newspaper the *Daily Mail*.

I'll tell you this, but you have to promise that it will get no further. Not long after we moved here we had the people next door round for dinner and – I swear this is true – they drove. I was astounded (I recall asking them jokingly if they used a light aircraft to get to the supermarket, which simply drew blank looks and the mental scratching of my name from all future invitation lists), but I have since come to realize that there was nothing especially odd in their driving less than a couple of hundred feet to visit us. **A**

10 A researcher at the University of California at Berkeley recently made a study of the nation's walking habits and concluded that 85 per cent of people in the United States are 'totally' sedentary. The average American walks less than 75 miles a year – about 1.4 miles a week, barely 350 yards a day. I'm no stranger to sloth myself, but that's appallingly little. **B**

15 One of the things we wanted when we moved to America was to live in a town within walking distance of shops. Hanover, where we settled, is a small, typical New England college town, pleasant, sedate and compact. It has a broad green, an old-fashioned Main Street, nice college buildings with big lawns, and leafy residential streets. **C** Nearly everyone in town is within a level five-minute walk of the shops, and yet as far as I can tell virtually no one does.

I walk to town nearly every day when I am at home. I go to the post office or library or the local bookshop, and sometimes, if I am feeling particularly debonair, I stop at Rosey Jekes Café for a cappuccino. Every few weeks or so I call in at the barbershop and let one of the guys there do something rash and lively with my hair. **D**

25 People have got used to this curious and eccentric behaviour now, but several times in the early days passing neighbours would slow by the kerb and ask if I wanted a lift.

'But I'm going your way,' they would insist when I politely declined. 'Really, it's no bother.'

'Honestly, I enjoy walking.'

**E** People have become so habituated to using the car for everything that it would never occur to them to unfurl their legs and see what they can do. Sometimes it's almost ludicrous. The other day I was in a little nearby town called Etna waiting to bring home one of my children from a piano lesson when a car stopped outside the local post office and a man about my age popped out and dashed inside (and left the motor running – something else that exercises me inordinately). He was inside



<sup>14</sup> sloth *laziness* <sup>18</sup> sedate *slow, calm, relaxing*

<sup>23</sup> debonair (old-fashioned) *fashionable, elegant and confident* <sup>34</sup> unfurl sth. (here) *stretch out sth.*

<sup>38</sup> exercise somebody *occupy somebody's thoughts (especially in a negative way)*

for about three or four minutes, then came out, got in the car and drove exactly 16 feet (I had nothing better to do so I paced it off) to the general store next door, and popped in again, engine still running. 40

**F** I'm sure he jogs extravagant distances and plays squash and does all kinds of exuberantly healthful things, but I'm just as sure that he drives to each of these undertakings. It's crazy. An acquaintance of ours was complaining the other day about the difficulty of finding a place to park outside the local gymnasium. She goes there several times a week to walk on a treadmill. The gymnasium is, at most, a six-minute walk from her front door. I asked her why she didn't walk to the gym and do six minutes less on the treadmill. 45

She looked at me as if I were tragically simple-minded and said, 'But I have a programme for the treadmill. It records my distance and speed, and I can adjust it for degree of difficulty.' **G** 50

According to a concerned and faintly horrified recent editorial in the *Boston Globe*, the United States spends less than 1 per cent of its \$25 billion-a-year roads budget on facilities for pedestrians. **H** Go to almost any suburb developed in the last thirty years – and there are thousands to choose from – and you will not find a pavement anywhere. Often you won't find a single pedestrian-crossing. I'm not exaggerating. [...] 55

The fact is, Americans not only don't walk anywhere, they won't walk anywhere, and woe to anyone who tries to make them, as a town here in New Hampshire called Laconia discovered to its cost. A few years ago Laconia spent \$5 million pedestrianizing its town center, to make it a pleasant shopping environment. **I** Forced to walk one whole block from a car park, shoppers abandoned downtown Laconia for suburban malls. 60

In 1994 Laconia dug up its pretty brick paving, took away the benches and tubs of geraniums and decorative trees, and put the street back to the way it had been in the first place. Now people can park right in front of the shops again and downtown Laconia thrives anew. And if that isn't sad, I don't know what is. 65

(From: *The Daily Mail*, 18 May, 1997)

<sup>59</sup> woe to (sb.) there will be trouble for (sb.)

Gap	A	B	C
Sentence	...	...	...

coo (infml) make noises expressing admiration

**1 MULTIPLE MATCHING:** Several sentences have been removed from Bill Bryson's report. Match sentences 1–11 with gaps A–I. Two sentences don't match.

- 1 I wish I were that mobile.
- 2 Aesthetically it was a triumph – urban planners came from all over to coo and take photos – but commercially it was a disaster.
- 3 It is, in short, an agreeable, easy place to stroll.
- 4 Nobody walks anywhere in America nowadays.
- 5 And the thing is this man looked really fit.
- 6 It had not occurred to me how thoughtlessly deficient nature is in this regard.
- 7 I'm simply not fit enough to do that.
- 8 All this is a big part of my life and I wouldn't dream of doing it other than on foot.
- 9 Actually, I'm surprised it's that much.
- 10 I rack up more mileage than that just looking for the channel changer.
- 11 'Well, if you're absolutely sure,' they would say and depart reluctantly, even guiltily as if they felt they were leaving the scene of an accident.

**2 MEDIATION ENGLISH TO GERMAN:** Bearbeiten Sie die folgenden Aufgaben auf Deutsch.

- 1 Erklären Sie, was mit dem Satz *(It) simply drew blank looks and the mental scratching of my name from all future invitation lists* (lines 5–7) gemeint ist.
- 2 Was meint der Autor mit dem Ausdruck *I rack up more mileage than that just looking for the channel changer*?
- 3 Erklären Sie die Bedeutung des Wortes *occur* in dem Satz *It would never occur to them to unfurl their legs.* (lines 33–34)
- 4 Bill Bryson erwähnt, dass die Vereinigten Staaten weniger als ein Prozent ihres Straßenbauetats dafür ausgeben, die Außenbezirke ihrer Städte fußgängerfreundlich zu gestalten. Inwiefern kommt ihm dieser Prozentsatz trotzdem relativ hoch vor?
- 5 Fassen Sie sinngemäß zusammen, welche unangenehme Erfahrung die Stadtväter von Laconia mit ihrem Versuch machten, die Innenstadt fußgängerfreundlich zu gestalten und wie sie auf diese Erfahrung reagierten.

## B Car Culture and the Shopping Mall

CD

**1** Listen to the following excerpt from a BBC radio documentary about American global influence and then answer the following questions.

- 1 How does the first speaker explain the appeal of the original fast food restaurants in southern California?
- 2 Explain the original popularity of shopping malls in the United States.
- 3 Explain the global popularity of shopping malls.
- 4 How does the layout of malls influence consumer behaviour?

## C The American Way of Life as Reflected on TV

DVD

American TV shows reflect and shape American lifestyles. Broadcast around the world, they also have a huge impact on the way the rest of the world sees the United States.



**1** Watch the excerpt from the TV series *The Sopranos* and then list all the aspects in the excerpt that you would consider typical of the USA, its lifestyles, attitudes and culture.

- 1 *Desperate Housewives*
- 2 *Friends*
- 3 *Gilmore Girls*
- 4 *The OC*

**2 TALKING:** In pairs, discuss the following topics:

- 1 What role do shopping malls play in your own life?
- 2 Why are American TV shows so successful around the world?

- 3 DESCRIPTIVE WRITING:** Describe and interpret the painting entitled *Morning Sun* by the American painter Edward Hopper (1882–1967). Write about 100 words.



## D The Assault on Reason

AL GORE

The following passage is an excerpt from the introduction of Al Gore's book 'The Assault on Reason' which deals with the role the media play in changing political discourse in America.

**A** Not long before our nation launched the invasion of Iraq, our longest-serving senator, Robert Byrd of West Virginia, stood on the Senate floor and said: 'This Chamber is, for the most part, silent – ominously, dreadfully silent. There is no debate, no discussion, no attempt to lay out for the nation the pros and cons of this particular war. There is nothing. We stand passively mute in the United States Senate.' Why was the Senate silent? 5

**B** In describing the empty chamber the way he did, Byrd invited a specific version of the same general question millions of us have been asking: 'Why do reason, logic, and truth seem to play a sharply diminished role in the way America now makes important decisions?' [...] 10

A large and growing number of Americans are asking out loud: 'What has happened to our country?' More and more people are trying to figure out what has gone wrong in our democracy, and how we can fix it.

**C** It is too easy – and too partisan – to simply place the blame on the policies of President George W. Bush. We are all responsible for the decisions our country makes. We have a Congress. We have an independent judiciary. We have checks and balances. Have they all failed us? [...] Why has America's public discourse become less focused and clear, less *reasoned*? [...] The truth is that American democracy is now in danger – not from any one set of ideas, but from unprecedented changes in the environment within which ideas either live and spread, or wither and die. I do not mean the physical environment; I mean what is called the public sphere, or the marketplace of ideas. 15 20



*Al Gore (b. 1948), US Vice-President 1993–2001*

**D** It is simply no longer possible to ignore the strangeness of our public discourse. I know I am not alone in feeling that something has gone fundamentally wrong. In  
25 2001, I had hoped it was an aberration when polls showed that three-quarters of Americans believed that Saddam Hussein was responsible for attacking us on September 11. More than five years later, however, nearly half of the American public still believes Saddam was connected to the attack. [...]

**E** Our Founders' faith in the viability of representative democracy rested on their  
30 trust in the wisdom of a well-informed citizenry, their ingenious design for checks and balances, and their belief that the rule of reason is the natural sovereign of free people. [...] Though they feared that the government might try to censor the printing press – as King George had done – the Founders could not imagine that America's public discourse would ever consist mainly of something other than  
35 printed words.

**F** And yet, today, almost forty-five years have passed since the majority of Americans received their news and information from the printed word. Newspapers are hemorrhaging readers. Reading itself is in decline, not only in our country but in most of the world. The Republic of Letters has been invaded and  
40 occupied by the empire of television. Radio, the Internet, movies, cell phones, iPods, computers, instant messaging, video games, and personal digital assistants all now vie for our attention – but it is television that still dominates the flow of information in modern America.

**G** [...] Today's massive flows of information are largely in only one direction. The  
45 world of television makes it virtually impossible for individuals to take part in what passes for a national conversation. Individuals receive, but they cannot send. They absorb, but they cannot share. They hear, but they do not speak. They see constant motion, but they do not move themselves. The 'well-informed citizenry' is in danger of becoming the 'well-amused audience.' [...]

**H** Along with the one-way nature of the public conversation on television and the  
50 distortion of journalism by entertainment values, there is another troubling characteristic of the television medium that is different from the print medium and less friendly to the traditions of democracy. The high capital investment required for the ownership and operation of a television station and the centralized  
55 nature of broadcast, cable, and satellite television networks have led to the increasing concentration of ownership by an ever smaller number of larger corporations that now effectively control the majority of television programming in America.

**I** These conglomerates are apparently sometimes tempted to bend their news-  
60 programming choices to support the achievement of commercial objectives. The news divisions – which used to be seen as serving a public interest and were subsidized by the rest of the network – are now seen as profit centers designed to generate revenue and, sometimes, to advance the larger agenda of the corporation that owns them. They have fewer reporters, fewer stories, smaller budgets, less  
65 travel, fewer bureaus, less-independent judgment, more vulnerability to influence by management, and more dependence on government sources and canned public relations handouts. The coverage of political campaigns, for example, focuses on the 'horse race' and little else. And the well-known axiom that guides most local television news is 'if it bleeds, it leads.' (To which some disheartened journalists

add, 'If it thinks, it stinks.') For these and other reasons, the U.S. press was recently found in a comprehensive international study to be only the fifty-third-freest press in the world. 70

**J** As Dan Rather put it, television news has been 'dumbed down and tarted up.' The purpose of television news now seems primarily to be to 'glue eyeballs to the screen' in order to build ratings and sell advertising. This was the point made by Jon Stewart, the brilliant host of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, when he visited CNN's *Crossfire*: There should be a distinction between news and entertainment. It really matters. The subjugation of news by entertainment seriously harms our democracy: It leads to dysfunctional journalism that fails to inform the people. And when the people are not informed, they cannot hold government accountable when it is incompetent, corrupt, or both. [...] 75 80

**K** To understand the final reason why the news marketplace of ideas dominated by television is so different from the one that emerged in the world dominated by the printing press, it is important to distinguish the quality of vividness experienced by television viewers from the 'vividness' experienced by readers. I believe that the vividness experienced in the reading of words is automatically modulated by the constant activation of the reasoning centers of the brain that are used in the process of co-creating the representation of reality the author has intended. By contrast, the visceral vividness portrayed on television has the capacity to trigger instinctual responses similar to those triggered by reality itself – and without being modulated by logic, reason, and reflective thought. 85 90

(From: *The Assault on Reason*, Penguin, New York, 2007)

**1 MULTIPLE CHOICE:** Choose the most suitable option.

- 1 The general theme of the entire excerpt is ...
  - a the insufficient freedom of the press.
  - b a lack of checks and balances.
  - c a lack of informed debate.
  - d the one-way flow of information.
- 2 According to Al Gore, who or what is to blame for the sorry state of American democracy?
  - a George W. Bush
  - b the political institutions
  - c the American people
  - d all of the above three
- 3 What is not said about America's political discourse in paragraphs C, D and E?
  - a It lacks logic and truthfulness.
  - b It has changed together with the marketplace of ideas.
  - c It is still dominated by the printed word.
  - d It's obvious that something has gone wrong with it.
- 4 The expression 'newspapers are hemorrhaging readers' (paragraph F) means that newspapers are ...
  - a losing a large percentage of their customers.
  - b taking advantage of their subscribers.
  - c increasing their circulation figures among readers.
  - d influencing their readers.

- 5 What negative aspect about the medium of television is not mentioned in paragraph H?
- The quality of reporting has been declining.
  - TV shows contain too many scenes of violent content.
  - There is too much power in the hands of too few people.
  - The medium itself prevents an honest exchange of ideas between broadcasters and viewers.
- 6 Which of the following is the most appropriate heading for paragraph I?
- Local news broadcasts concentrate on crime stories
  - News divisions of national TV networks see their budgets cut
  - Abuse of quality journalism for the sake of overall profit
  - News divisions used to reflect owners' views
- 7 By using the expression 'canned public relations handouts' (lines 66–67), Al Gore implies that the news divisions of major networks ...
- are dependent on prepared statements from official sources that serve to prevent further questions.
  - receive statements from official sources that are packaged so well that no one else can access the information.
  - rely on releases designed to improve the relationship between politicians and journalists.
  - receive free gifts from official sources so that the journalists report on the issues more favorably.
- 8 In paragraph K, it appears that Al Gore is convinced that, compared to the vividness experienced by readers, the vividness experienced by television viewers is ...
- |                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| a vastly superior. | c of similar value.    |
| b vastly inferior. | d is equally striking. |

**2 GAPPED SUMMARY:** Fill in the blanks with suitable words from paragraphs H, I and J.

Gore finds it extremely ... (1) that a relatively large number of individual American television stations are controlled by a comparatively tiny number of big corporations that are primarily interested in supporting their own business ... (2). They are thus more inclined to use their TV news divisions for the sake of entertaining the masses – thereby generating advertising revenue – rather than for ... (3) the common good of the population as a whole. As television news departments are forced to get by on ever tighter budgets, they are no longer able to hire as many good investigative journalists and, as a result, their ... (4) with regard to corporate control as well as their dependence on official government news releases increases. Due to the fact that they lack the staff necessary to provide adequate ... (5) of current political campaigns in the US, TV news programmes tend to concentrate on sensational political stories, not on ... (6) analysis of the issues. In the view of the critics, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a ... (7) between factual journalism, on the one hand, and 'soft' news, on the other. A lack of critical journalistic perspective makes it very difficult for the media to make government ... (8) to the American public.

## E Divided America

ANDREW SULLIVAN

Before you read the text, discuss the following statements with a partner and say whether they apply to the USA, and why:

- Divorce rates are higher in liberal states than in conservative ones.
- A stable marriage depends on the degree of secondary education the partners have.
- Abortion rates are usually lower in conservative states.

When America sat down last week for its annual rite of national Thanksgiving, some would argue that two different nations actually celebrated: upright, moral, traditional red America and the dissolute, liberal blue states clustered on the periphery of the heartland. The truth, however, is much more complicated and interesting than that.

Take two iconic states: Texas and Massachusetts. In some ways, they were the two states competing in the last election. In the world's imagination, you couldn't have two starker opposites. One is the homeplace of Harvard, gay marriage, high taxes, and social permissiveness. The other is Bush country, solidly Republican, traditional, and gun-toting. Massachusetts voted for Kerry over Bush 62 to 37 percent; Texas voted for Bush over Kerry 61 to 38 percent.

So ask yourself a simple question: which state has the highest divorce rate?

Marriage was a key issue in the last election, with Massachusetts' gay marriages becoming a symbol of alleged blue-state decadence and moral decay. But in actual fact, Massachusetts has the lowest divorce rate in the country at 2.4 divorces per 1,000 inhabitants. Texas – which until recently made private gay sex a criminal offence – has a divorce rate of 4.1. A fluke? Not at all. [...] Every single one of the high divorce rate states went for Bush. Every single one of the low divorce rate states went for Kerry. The Bible Belt divorce rate, in fact, is roughly 50 percent higher than the national average.

Some of this discrepancy can be accounted for by the fact that couples tend to marry younger in the Bible Belt – and many clearly don't have the maturity to know what they're getting into. There's some correlation too between rates of college education and stable marriages, with the Bible Belt lagging behind a highly educated state like Massachusetts. But the irony still holds. Those parts of America that most fiercely uphold what they believe are traditional values are not those parts where traditional values are healthiest. Hypocrisy? Perhaps. A more insightful explanation is that these socially troubled communities cling onto absolutes in the abstract because they cannot live up to them in practice. [...]

Or take abortion. America is one of the few Western countries where the legality of abortion is still ferociously disputed. It's a country where the religious right is arguably the strongest single voting bloc, and in which abortion is a constant feature of cultural politics. Compare it to a country like Holland, perhaps the epitome of socially liberal, relativist liberalism. So which country has the highest rate of abortion? It's not even close. America has an abortion rate of 21 abortions per 1,000 women aged between 15 and 44. Holland has a rate of 6.8. Americans, in other words, have three times as many abortions as the Dutch. Remind me again: Which country is the most socially conservative?

(From: *Sunday Times*, 28 November, 2004)

<sup>3</sup> red America ... blue states reference to the American states that traditionally tend to vote Republican (red) or Democrat (blue) <sup>6</sup> iconic (here) acting as a model <sup>8</sup> Harvard = Harvard University university in Cambridge, Massachusetts, considered one of the finest academic institutions worldwide <sup>10</sup> gun-toting carrying guns <sup>10</sup> Kerry = John F. Kerry (born 1943) Democratic senator from Massachusetts, candidate for the US presidency in 2004 <sup>10</sup> Bush = George W. Bush (born 1946) 43rd president of the United States (2001–2009), who won over Kerry in the presidential elections in 2004 <sup>17</sup> fluke (informal) Zufall <sup>19</sup> Bible Belt area of the southern and mid-western USA where Christianity plays a dominant role <sup>32</sup> voting bloc group of voters who are united by a common interest

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**1 MULTIPLE CHOICE:** Choose the most suitable option.

- 1 When the author refers to social permissiveness (line 9), he means that in Massachusetts, ...
  - a people get a lot of welfare benefits.
  - b inhabitants are allowed to take part in various recreational programmes free of charge.
  - c the various social classes get on well with one another.
  - d forms of behaviour are tolerated that many people elsewhere don't approve of.
- 2 According to the text, the fact that Massachusetts has the lowest divorce rate of any state in the nation is ...
  - a a fluke.
  - b directly related to its liberal image.
  - c attributed to the fact that people there tend to marry later and be better educated.
  - d a consequence of the state's gay marriage laws.
- 3 In the author's view, Texas is ...
  - a a prime example of a state that has a very conservative agenda.
  - b in favour of gun control laws, even though a majority of people there own guns.
  - c fairly open-minded when it comes to gay rights.
  - d the epitome of a very progressive state.
- 4 According to the text, the fact that the so-called 'Bible Belt' clings so fanatically to conservative values is most likely related to ...
  - a extreme political rivalry that exists between the Democratic and Republican parties.
  - b people there simply not being able to fulfil the demands they place on themselves.
  - c the role that Christian theology plays there.
  - d people there adhering to a double standard.
- 5 With regard to abortion, ...
  - a its acceptance varies from region to region in the United States.
  - b the number performed in America pales in comparison to the number performed in the Netherlands.
  - c Americans tend to be less divided on this issue than in the past.
  - d the number of cases in America is relatively low because the conservative right is so influential.
- 6 In general, the author thinks that ...
  - a parts of the US are hopelessly backward.
  - b countries such as Holland can be proud of their liberal traditions.
  - c the so-called 'Bible Belt' needs to become more enlightened.
  - d America is fascinating because of the many contrasting social philosophies found there.



**2 TALKING:** Go back to the introductory discussion points you talked about in the beginning and say which are correct.

### 3 Civil Rights in the USA

#### A A More Perfect Union

BARACK OBAMA

President Barack Obama gave this speech on March 18, 2008 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the start of his election campaign for the Presidency.

#### “We the people, in order to form a more perfect union.”

**A** Two hundred and twenty one years ago, in a hall that still stands across the street, a group of men gathered and, with these simple words, launched America’s improbable experiment in democracy. Farmers and scholars; statesmen and patriots who had traveled across an ocean to escape tyranny and persecution finally made real their declaration of independence. The document they produced was eventually signed but ultimately unfinished. It was stained by this nation’s original sin of slavery. Of course, the answer to the slavery question was already embedded within our Constitution – a Constitution that had at its very core the ideal of equal citizenship under the law; a Constitution that promised its people liberty, and justice, and a union that could be and should be perfected over time.

**B** And yet words on a parchment would not be enough to deliver slaves from bondage, or provide men and women of every color and creed their full rights and obligations as citizens of the United States. What would be needed were Americans in successive generations who were willing to do their part – through protests and struggle, on the streets and in the courts, through a civil war and civil disobedience and always at great risk – to narrow that gap between the promise of our ideals and the reality of their time.

**C** Race is an issue that I believe this nation cannot afford to ignore right now. Segregated schools were, and are, inferior schools; we still haven’t fixed them, fifty years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, and the inferior education they provided, then and now, helps explain the pervasive achievement gap between today’s black and white students. Legalized discrimination – where blacks were prevented, often through violence, from owning property, or loans were not granted to African-American business owners, or black homeowners could not access mortgages, or blacks were excluded from unions, or the police force, or fire departments – meant that black families could not amass any meaningful wealth to bequeath to future generations. That history helps explain the wealth and income gap between black and white, and the concentrated pockets of poverty that persist in so many of today’s urban and rural communities. A lack of economic opportunity among black men, and the shame and frustration that came from not being able to provide for one’s family, contributed to the erosion of black families – a problem that welfare policies for many years may have worsened. And the lack of basic services in so many urban black neighborhoods – parks for kids to play in, police walking the beat, regular garbage pick-up and building code enforcement – all helped create a cycle of violence, blight and neglect that



continue to haunt us. That legacy of defeat was passed on to future generations – those young men and increasingly young women who we see standing on street  
40 corners or languishing in our prisons, without hope or prospects for the future.

**D** In fact, a similar anger exists within segments of the white community. Most working- and middle-class white Americans don't feel that they have been particularly privileged by their race. Their experience is the immigrant experience – as far as they're concerned, no one's handed them anything, they've built it from  
45 scratch. They've worked hard all their lives, many times only to see their jobs shipped overseas or their pension dumped after a lifetime of labor. They are anxious about their futures, and feel their dreams slipping away; in an era of stagnant wages and global competition, opportunity comes to be seen as a zero sum game, in which your dreams come at my expense. So when they are told to  
50 bus their children to a school across town; when they hear that an African American is getting an advantage in landing a good job or a spot in a good college because of an injustice that they themselves never committed; when they're told that their fears about crime in urban neighborhoods are somehow prejudiced, resentment builds over time.

**E** Just as black anger often proved counterproductive, so have these white resentments distracted attention from the real culprits of the middle class squeeze – a corporate culture rife with inside dealing, questionable accounting practices, and short-term greed; a Washington dominated by lobbyists and special interests; economic policies that favor the few over the many. But I have asserted  
60 a firm conviction – a conviction rooted in my faith in God and my faith in the American people – that working together we can move beyond some of our old racial wounds, and that in fact we have no choice if we are to continue on the path of a more perfect union.

**F** For the African-American community, that path means continuing to insist on  
65 a full measure of justice in every aspect of American life. But it also means binding our particular grievances – for better health care, and better schools, and better jobs – to the larger aspirations of all Americans – the white woman struggling to break the glass ceiling, the white man who has been laid off, the immigrant trying to feed his family. And it means taking full responsibility for our own lives – by  
70 demanding more from our fathers, and spending more time with our children, and reading to them, and teaching them that while they may face challenges and discrimination in their own lives, they must never succumb to despair or cynicism; they must always believe that they can write their own destiny.

**G** In the white community, the path to a more perfect union means  
75 acknowledging that what ails the African-American community does not just exist in the minds of black people; that current incidents of discrimination, while less overt than in the past – are real and must be addressed. It requires all Americans to realize that your dreams do not have to come at the expense of my dreams; that investing in the health, welfare, and education of black and brown and white  
80 children will ultimately help all of America prosper.

**H** For we have a choice in this country. We can accept a politics that breeds division, and conflict, and cynicism. That is one option. Or, at this moment, in this election, we can come together and say, 'Not this time.'

(Abridged)

**1 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS / SENTENCE COMPLETION:** Answer the following questions and complete the following sentences by providing the required information.

- 1 The various groups of people who founded the United States hoped to realize their dream of ... , ... and ... .
- 2 The phrase ... makes it clear that the performance of white students and black students still varies greatly in schools all around the country.
- 3 What word is used to describe the deterioration of family structures as a result of the relatively poor chances of African-American fathers finding a job?
- 4 The phrase ... is used to show that many immigrants arrived in America with nothing but, as a result of hard work, are now able to support themselves reasonably well.
- 5 What phrase does the author use to describe the fact that mainstream American workers are currently confronted with hard times?

**2 MEDIATION ENGLISH TO GERMAN:** Beantworten Sie die folgenden Fragen stichpunktartig auf Deutsch.

- 1 Welche Probleme und Mängel der farbigen Bevölkerung Amerikas werden im Text erwähnt und welche Langzeitfolgen sind deswegen zu spüren?
- 2 Was alles hat zur Verbitterung der weißen Mittelschicht beigetragen?
- 3 Welche Missstände sind tatsächlich für die Probleme der Mittelklasse in den USA verantwortlich?
- 4 Wie müssen sich, nach Ansicht des Autors, die farbigen Amerikaner in die Gesellschaft einbringen, damit diese gerechter wird?
- 5 Wie können die Weißen zu einer besseren Gesellschaft beitragen?

**3 DESCRIPTIVE WRITING:** What do the statistics below reveal about poverty among children in the United States? Write about 100 words.

**Children Below Poverty Level in the United States:**

Year	Percent below poverty level		
	White	Black	Hispanic
1970	10.5	41.5	(NA)
1980	13.4	42.1	33.0
1990	15.1	44.2	37.7
2000	13.1	31.2	28.4

NA Not available.  
(Source: *Poverty in the United States: 2002*, US Census Bureau)

**4 PROJECT:** In groups, investigate the history of the American civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. Choose topics from the following list of events, court cases and organizations – and present your findings to the class.

- Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Rosa Parks and the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama (1955)
- Voter registration campaign in Selma, Alabama
- March on Washington, D.C. in 1963
- Civil Rights Act of 1964

## B We Shall Overcome

MANFRED BERG

Im Norden, wo sie einigermaßen frei wählen konnten, waren die Afroamerikaner bis in die 30er Jahre des 20. Jahrhunderts zahlenmäßig unbedeutend. Zu ihrem wichtigsten ‚Verbündeten‘ im Kampf um die Emanzipation wurde hier schließlich die Demografie. Immer mehr Afroamerikaner zogen in den Norden, wo sie in den großen Industriezentren Arbeit und ein freies Leben zu finden hofften. Damit bestand erstmals wieder die Chance, in Wahlkreisen mit mehrheitlich schwarzer Bevölkerung eigene Kandidaten durchzubringen. Von nun an bildeten die schwarzen Wähler der Großstädte im Norden eine verlässliche Säule der demokratischen Partei, die sich viel stärker als die Republikaner für ihre Gleichberechtigung einsetzte.

Im Süden dagegen musste das Wahlrecht unter großen Opfern erkämpft werden. Immer wieder wurden Afroamerikaner, die sich für die Wahl registrieren lassen wollten, misshandelt oder ermordet. Aber auch hier herrschte inzwischen ein neuer Geist. Vor allem viele Veteranen der Armee, die im 2. Weltkrieg in Europa und Ostasien zwei selbst ernannte ‚Herrenrassen‘ besiegt hatte, verlangten völlige Gleichstellung. Zwischen 1945 und 1952 verdoppelte sich die Zahl der in den Südstaaten registrierten schwarzen Wähler.

Doch erst die Bürgerrechtsbewegung, die seit der Mitte der 50er Jahre die weiße Vorherrschaft in gewaltlosen Massenprotesten herausforderte, erzielte den Durchbruch. Im ‚Freiheitssommer‘ 1964 versuchten schwarze und weiße Bürgerrechtler die schwarze Landbevölkerung in Mississippi zu politisieren, wo der Rassismus besonders gewalttätig war. Anfang 1965 begann Martin Luther King eine große Registrierungskampagne in Selma, Alabama, um die Unterdrückung im tiefen Süden vor der ganzen Nation an den Pranger zu stellen. Der Sheriff der Stadt ließ den Protest brutal niederknüppeln.

Unter dem Eindruck der schockierenden Fernsehbilder gab Präsident Lyndon B. Johnson den Justizminister den Auftrag, zum Schutz des schwarzen Wahlrechts ‚das gottverdammte härteste Gesetz‘ auszuarbeiten, das er sich ausdenken könne. Im August 1965 verabschiedete der Kongress schließlich ein durchgreifendes Gesetz, den *Voting Rights Act*, der die Wahlen in großen Teilen des Südens der Bundesaufsicht unterstellte. Als er das Gesetz in den Kongress einbrachte, zitierte Johnson die Hymne der Bürgerrechtsbewegung: *We shall overcome*. Das Gesetz hatte spektakuläre Folgen. Insgesamt erreichte die schwarze Wählerregistrierung mit rund 60 Prozent aller Wahlberechtigten annähernd das Niveau der weißen Südstaatler. Erstmals seit vielen Jahren gewannen Afroamerikaner nun wieder politische Ämter im Süden. Landesweit gesehen konnte von einer fairen Beteiligung an der Macht indessen noch keine Rede sein. Durch die manipulative Einteilung der Wahlkreise und andere Verfahrenstricks sollte das schwarze Stimmenpotential so weit wie möglich geschwächt werden. Erst als der Oberste Gerichtshof und der Kongress diesen Praktiken in den 70er und 80er Jahren Einhalt geboten, stieg die Zahl der schwarzen Kongressabgeordneten merklich an.

Gleichwohl bleiben die Schwarzen in den USA eine Minderheit, die nur 10 Prozent aller Wählerstimmen ausmacht. Ihre Politiker die höhere Ämter anstreben, benötigen deshalb eine breite Unterstützung auch in der weißen Bevölkerung und immer mehr auch unter den Hispanics. Der Demokrat Barack Obama hat im Gegensatz zum früheren schwarzen Präsidentschaftskandidaten Jesse Jackson die Fähigkeit, Wahlkoalitionen zu schmieden, welche die Gräben zwischen den ethnischen Gruppen der USA überbrücken. Sollte er auf den Stufen des Kapitols in Washington den Amtseid schwören, dann wäre dies nicht nur ein Symbol für die Emanzipation der schwarzen Minderheit, sondern auch für die Emanzipation der amerikanischen Gesellschaft von ihrer langen und dunklen Geschichte der Rassendiskriminierung.

(Adapted from *Die Zeit* Nr. 26, 9 June, 2008)

**1 MEDIATION GERMAN TO ENGLISH:** Informieren Sie Ihre Mitschüler in einem Kurzreferat über wesentliche Entwicklungen im Emanzipationsprozess der Afroamerikaner in den USA seit den 30er Jahren. Verwenden Sie dazu die markierten Textpassagen des Artikels und schreiben Sie ungefähr 250 Wörter.

Fangen Sie so an: *Up until the 1930s, Afro-Americans in the north ...*

## WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

Look at these paragraphs from a student's paper about the United States. The teacher has marked the mistakes.

Americans are people, which believe in freedom and individual opportunity. To most Americans, freedom of choice is more important than social equality, what is understandable in the light of American history. Fleeing from persecution and poverty in their birth lands, America has always been a land of liberty and opportunity for millions of immigrants. Many Americans see the United States as a 'city upon a hill', i. e. a country, that has a mission in the world: to offer opportunities for those, who are seeking a better life and to bring democracy and prosperity to other parts of the world.

One lasting feature of American democracy is the election of the president of the USA every four years. Elected in November, the president's inauguration does not take place until the following January. In their inaugural addresses, American presidents have traditionally called for national unity and emphasized that what all Americans believe in.

- 1 With a partner, correct as many of the mistakes in the paragraphs above as you can. Ask your teacher, if you are not certain.
- 2 Translate the following sentences into English. Make sure you avoid the mistakes contained in the blue box above.
  - 1 Durch die Aussicht auf Wohlstand getrieben, setzen manche latein-amerikanischen Einwanderer ihr Leben aufs Spiel, um in die USA zu gelangen.
  - 2 Unter großen Schwierigkeiten gelingt es vielen Einwanderern, sich in Amerika zu integrieren.
  - 3 Überwältigt durch die große Zahl an Neuankömmlingen, versucht die amerikanische Regierung, Wege zu finden, nur noch ausgebildete Einwanderer ins Land zu lassen.
  - 4 Den Minderheiten in Amerika kulturelle Konformität aufzuzwingen, wird von Anhängern eines multikulturellen Konzepts strikt abgelehnt.
  - 5 Sie glauben, dass das, was die Einwanderer dem Land anzubieten haben, erhalten werden sollte.
  - 6 Die Einstellung von Einwanderern der dritten Generation zu vielen gesellschaftlichen Fragen ähnelt der anderer Amerikaner, was sich eindeutig in Statistiken niederschlägt.